(b) whether Government have taken steps to improve the infrastructure, storage and handling of the cargo;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government propose to set up a more efficient grievance redressal mechanism at the respective stations for the damage and wastage caused to cargo; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Necessary infrastructure is provided for handling of cargo as per the offering of traffic at railway stations. All possible steps are taken to prevent avoidable damages and loss to the cargo.

(d) and (e) The application for filing a claim for compensation is accepted at the railway station(s), who forward the same to the concerned Divisional/ Zonal Railway head quarter. The Station Managers of selected important stations have also been empowered to settle claims for compensations upto Rs. 400/- in each case.

Rail Land Development Authority

2733. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Parliamentary Standing Committee has pulled up his Ministry for a delay in forming Land Development Authority even after Railways Act was amended in 2005 to facilitate the creation of the RLDA;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons for delay in constituting the same;

(c) if so, whether delay in setting up of the RLDA cost the Ministry over 300 crores; and

(d) if so, by what time Government are likely to set up this RLDA?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Standing Committee on Railways expressed unhappiness on the delay in forming the Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA). The delay was mainly due to elaborate long process of drafting of Rules and vetting of the same by the Ministry of Law and Justice. The Authority has since been constituted with effect from 1.11.2006.

(c) No, Sir. Even before Rail Land Development Authority (RLDA) came into being, commercial development of railway land was taken up by Railways through its Public Sector Units *viz.* M/s RITES (Rail India Technical and Economic Services Limited/IRCON (Indian Railway Construction Company Limited) and 61 sites were identified and taken up under the scheme. Out of these in 9 cases bids were finalized and Railways have realized Rs.12.61 crore so far from these sites.

(d) RLDA has since been constituted with effect from 1.11.2006 and Rules have been notified in *Gazette* on 4.1.2007. The Authority has started functioning from 19.1.2007.